

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments from the Office Action mailed August 20, 2007 have been carefully considered. Claims 5 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims 5 and 24 in a later filed continuing application. Claims 1-4, 6-23, and 25-36 remain pending in the application and claims 37-39 have been newly added. Claims 1, 6, 20, and 25 have been amended. Support for these changes can be found throughout the specification and figures, e.g., page 3, lines 12-19. No new matter has been added.

Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Allowable Claims

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating claims 6 and 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Claims 6 and 25 have been so rewritten as new claims 37 and 38. Accordingly, Applicants request allowance of claims 37 and 38.

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

Translations of cited reference DE 20120690 and cited reference EP 0671856 are being provided herewith with a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. In addition, German reference DE 9306970U is being resubmitted herewith per the Examiner's request. German reference DE4313362A1, which appears to relate to DE 9306970U, also is being submitted along with an English language abstract.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 5, 7-10, 15, 17-20, 24, 26-29, 35, and 36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0156389 to Busse et al. (hereinafter "Busse") in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and U.S. Patent No. 3,668,476 to Wrabel et al. (hereinafter "Wrabel"). Claims 5 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to these claims moot. With respect to claims 1, 7-10, 15, 17-20, 26-29, 35, and 36, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a housing having a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rest. The stop inhibits removal of the printed circuit board from the housing when the front part is detached from the housing.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rest that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing.

The holding or support element disclosed in Busse is not a stop as recited in claim 1. Busse does not disclose that the holding element inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing. Rather, since large forces can occur when *connecting* insulation-displacement contacts, the holding or supporting element of Busse is latched to a printed circuit board 6 in an area of the input contacts 9 to fix the contacts 9 on the printed circuit board 6. Busse is silent regarding disconnection of the input contacts from the printed circuit board 6.

References DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel do not overcome the shortcomings of Busse. None of these references disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rest that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing. Accordingly, no reason is provided in Busse or elsewhere to add a stop as recited in claim 1 to the connection module 1 of Busse.

For at least these reasons, Busse would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 1, even in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel. Claims 7-10, 15, and 17-19 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1, 7-10, 15, and 17-19 are respectfully requested.

Claim 20 recites, in part, a housing including multiple stops against which end faces of the printed circuit boards rest when the printed circuit boards are arranged within the housing. The stops inhibit removal of the printed circuit boards from the housing when the front part is detached from the housing.

As noted above with respect to claim 1, none of the cited references disclose or suggest multiple stops against which end faces of the printed circuit boards rest that inhibit removal of the printed circuit boards from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing.

For at least these reasons, Busse would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 20, even in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel. Claims 26-29, 35, and 36 depend from claim 20 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 20, 26-29, 35, and 36 are respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4, and 21-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the references as applied to claims 1 and 20, above, and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,217,368 to Baron et al. (hereinafter "Baron"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Baron does not overcome the shortcomings of Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel. Baron also does not disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing.

For at least these reasons, Busse would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claims 2-4, even in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, Wrabel, and Baron. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 2-4 are respectfully requested.

Claims 21-23 depend from claim 20 and are allowable over Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 20. Baron does not overcome the shortcomings of Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claims 2-4.

For at least these reasons, Busse would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claims 21-23, even in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, Wrabel, and Baron. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 21-23 are respectfully requested.

Claims 7, 11-14, 26, and 30-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the references as applied to claims 1 and 20, above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,150,282 to Tomura et al. (hereinafter "Tomura"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 7 and 11-14 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Tomura does not overcome the shortcomings of Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel. Tomura also does not disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing.

For at least these reasons, Busse would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claims 7 and 11-14, even in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, Wrabel, and Tomura. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 7 and 11-14 are respectfully requested.

Claims 26 and 30-33 depend from claim 20 and are allowable over Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 20. Tomura does not overcome the shortcomings of Busse, DE 20120690, EP 0671856, and Wrabel for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 11-14.

For at least these reasons, Busse would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claims 26 and 30-33, even in view of DE 20120690, EP 0671856, Wrabel, and Tomura. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 26 and 30-33 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 11, 15, and 17-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 20120960 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,729,738 to Heng et al. (hereinafter "Heng") and Tomura. Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to claim 5 moot. With respect to claims 1, 7, 8, 11, 15, and 17-19, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a housing having a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rest. The stop inhibits removal of the printed circuit board from the housing when the front part is detached from the housing.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing.

DE 20120960 does not even disclose a front part being detached from a housing. Rather, upper portions 2a of a housing 2 appear to be pivotally coupled to a lower portion 2b. Compare FIGS. 6a and 6b. Furthermore, no structure is provided on the lower portion 2b of the housing 2 against which an end face of a printed circuit board 15 may rest to inhibit removal of the printed circuit board 15 from the lower part 2b when the upper portions 2a are pivoted away from the printed circuit board 15. Rather, the printed circuit board 15 is held by projections on the lower part 2b. See page 7, last paragraph of the translation.

None of the cited references overcome the shortcomings of DE 20120960. Neither Heng nor Tomura disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing. Accordingly, no reason is provided in DE 20120960 or elsewhere to modify the housing 2 of DE 20120960 to include stops as recited in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, DE 20120960 would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 1, even in view of Heng and Tomura. Claims 5, 7, 8, 11, 15, and 17-19 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 11, 15, and 17-19 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 11, 15-24, 26, 27, 30, and 34-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wrabel in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,830,625 to Vignoli (hereinafter "Vignoli"), Busse, Tomura, and Baron. Claims 5 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to these claims moot. With respect to claims 1-4, 7, 8, 11, 15-23, 26, 27, 30, and 34-36, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

With respect to claim 1, as discussed above, none of the cited references disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing.

Wrabel does not disclose the stop recited in claim 1. Wrabel does not even disclose a front part being detached from a housing. No motivation is provided in Wrabel or elsewhere to modify the structure in Wrabel to add a stop or to include a detachable front part. Rather, Wrabel discloses extensions 118, 119 of circuit board 110 over which electric connector jacks

can be inserted to provide electrical continuity from external electrical components to the circuit board 110. See *Wrabel*, column 5, lines 51-58.

None of the cited references overcome the shortcomings of *Wrabel*. Vignoli, Busse, Tomura, and Baron also fail to disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing when a front part is detached from the housing. Accordingly, no reason is provided in *Wrabel* or elsewhere to modify the housing of *Wrabel* to include a stop as recited in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, *Wrabel* would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 1, even in view of Vignoli, Busse, Tomura, and Baron. Claims 2-4, 7, 8, 11, 15-19 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-4, 7, 8, 11, 15-19 are respectfully requested.

With respect to claim 20, none of the cited references disclose or suggest multiple stops against which end faces of the printed circuit boards rest that inhibit removal of the printed circuit boards from the housing. As discussed above with respect to claim 1, none of the cited references even disclose or suggest a stop behind which an end face of the printed circuit board rests that inhibits removal of a printed circuit board from a housing.

For at least these reasons, *Wrabel* would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 20, even in view of Vignoli, Busse, Tomura, and Baron. Claims 21-23, 26, 27, 30, and 34-36 depend from claim 20 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 20-23, 26, 27, 30, and 34-36 are respectfully requested.

New Claims

As noted above, claims 6 and 25 have been rewritten in independent form as new claims 37 and 38. No new matter has been added.

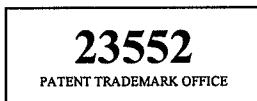
Claim 39 also has been newly added. Support for claim 39 can be found throughout the specification and figures. No new matter has been added. To the extent the above rejections apply to claim 39, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claim 39 recites, in part, fork contacts configured to detach from the printed circuit boards when the connecting strips are detached from the housing. Claim 39 also recites multiple stops that inhibit removal of the printed circuit boards from the housing in a first direction when the connecting strips are detached from the housing in the first direction.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest multiple stops that inhibit removal of the printed circuit boards from the housing in a first direction when the connecting strips are detached from the housing in the first direction. For at least these reasons, claim 39 is allowable over the cited references. Examination and allowance of claim 39 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



Date: Feb. 20, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Bruess", written over a horizontal line.

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